



Advocating for teachers
and public education

**Testimony of
Connecticut Education Association
Before the
Appropriations Committee Public Hearing
December 9, 2009**

**Connecticut Education
Association**

Governance

Philip Apruzzese, President
Sheila Cohen, Vice President
Cheryl Prevost, Secretary
Jeff Leake, Treasurer
Maureen Honan, NEA Director
Tom Nicholas, NEA Director

Executive Office

Dr. John Yrchik
Executive Director

Government Relations

Mark Waxenberg, Director
Capitol Place, Suite 500
21 Oak Street
Hartford, CT 06106-8001
860-525-5641, 800-842-4316
Fax: 860-725-6362
www.cea.org

Affiliated with the
National Education
Association

Re: Governor Rell Proposed Deficit Mitigation Plan

The Connecticut Education Association (CEA) and its 40,000 members strongly urge the members of the Appropriations Committee to reject Governor Rell's proposed \$ 84 million cut in municipal aid and her proposed devastating \$ 320,000 cut in funding for CommPACT schools.

The proposed municipal aid cut is merely a shift of the states budgetary problem onto municipalities where towns have, already, drastically reduced their budgets and raised property taxes. Cutting state aid in mid-year would not be a savings, but lay a significant fiscal problem on our communities which are already facing serious short- falls in revenues.

We strongly urge the rejection of this proposed \$84 million reduction in municipal aid.

CEA also urges you to reject the \$320,000 cut in funding for the eight CommPACT schools that are currently operating in Waterbury, Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven and New London.

These schools are the first-of-its-kind school reform program developed to address the achievement gap issues in Connecticut's public schools and to create the kind of vibrant learning environment we wish for all of our children. This proposal also sends the wrong message to the parents, teachers, administrators and community members who are working to turn their schools around.

Furthermore, as our State Department of Education seeks millions of dollars from the federal government's \$4 billion "Race To The Top" program, this action ravages this model reform program and sabotages our efforts and credibility as we seek to compete with the other states for reform effort federal money.

In closing, CEA asks that you reject these very harmful proposals.